

Adverse Drug Interactions

Quarterly Health Initiative

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What is an adverse drug interaction? Harm resulting from the combination of two or more drugs taken at the same time. This includes interactions with over the counter (OTC) drugs, vitamins, supplements, and food.

Reducing Adverse Drug Interactions

Half of the prescriptions taken each year in the U.S. are used improperly, and 96% of patients nationwide do not ask how to use their medications.

- Tell your doctor(s) and pharmacist about any drugs you take on a regular basis, including over the counter (OTC) products such as **vitamins, allergy medications, acetaminophen or ibuprofen, St. John's Wort, and dietary supplements.**
- Use one pharmacy. The pharmacist can easily check for drug interactions.

Is someone with a mental illness at risk of adverse drug interaction?

Often times, people taking medicine for behavioral health conditions see different healthcare practitioners for physical health care and may have multiple prescribers. This increases the risk of an adverse drug interaction.

- Keep a list of your medications and OTC products. Bring the list with you to your doctor appointments.
- Learn about the warnings for each medication you take.
- Keep medication in original containers.

Ask your behavioral health or medical provider:

- How might drinking alcohol, taking herbal supplements, or certain foods cause an adverse drug reaction?
- What should I do if I think I am experiencing an adverse drug reaction?
- Is it safe to take new medications with other medications, herbal supplements and over the counter (OTC) products?

Drug Interactions

1. Drugs with other drugs.
2. Drugs with food or beverage.
3. Drugs with OTCs, supplements/vitamins

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What are the symptoms of an adverse drug interaction?

The following are some reactions that you might notice:

- Sleepiness
- Irregular heart-beats
- Increased bleeding
- Hyperactivity
- Increased blood pressure
- Inability to sleep
- Stomach upset

Contact your healthcare practitioner. Explain your symptoms; when they started and whether they are different from other symptoms you have had before.

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Online Resources

For more helpful resources on adverse drug interactions, visit our website:

www.cpsaArizona.org/interactions



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This flyer and related materials can be found online at: www.azdhs.gov/bhs/qhi/